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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY USSR

SUBJECT USSR Freight Grain Cars and Shipments

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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[redacted] 90% or more of the freight cars most commonly used for grain shipments were of wood and had a capacity of one thousand poods or about 16½ metric tons. Loading time naturally depended on whether manpower or mechanized equipment was used. Normally, if the regular grain elevators were at the loading or unloading point, mechanical equipment was used. In the case of equipment, it took about 45 or 50 minutes to load one car. On the other hand, if no equipment was available and assuming the grain warehouse was an average of 30 meters from the railroad siding, it took a four-man team (most common work team) four hours to load and unload the same size car. Where grain was loaded by hand it was always sacked in five-pood (80 kilogram) sacks. About 12 sacks made up one ton (metric). Each man took between four and five minutes for a round trip from warehouse to car carrying one sack at a time, or he carried approximately 12 to 15 sacks an hour. [One sack each four minutes or 15 sacks an hour per man; 60 sacks in four hours per man or 240 sacks per four-man team each four hours.] The cars were usually filled by sack count. Grain was never transported loose from or to any points where loading equipment was not available. It would be sacked in five-pood sacks at the kolkhoz and moved to the railroad loading point where it would be stored loose, for the sacks had to be returned to the kolkhoz. If no equipment was available for loading loose it would be resacked for shipment. 25X1

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The 15 ton (US) car would be roughly the equivalent of the 16½ ton (metric) car used in the Soviet. [redacted] one thousand poods are loaded [redacted]

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per car or two hundred, five-pood sacks (each sack weighing 80 kilograms). There were no 20-ton cars, but a few 30 and 40-ton (metric) cars were used with the 40-ton car being the more common of the two. All cars were carefully checked to make sure they were not overloaded. Grain was considered so valuable that if a breakdown of a car occurred with a resulting loss or damage of grain, the responsible person or persons were severely punished.

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Most of the grain in the Soviet Ukraine is moved during the months of August, September, and October, the so-called "harvest campaign". During this period everything was speeded up; loading, switching, dispatching, etc. When a car was moved to the loading platform workers would be ready to start loading. Extra workers were assigned to help, at times even office workers. Hence, it is hard to say how long it took to load a car under such speeded-up conditions. However, at Kiev 30-car grain trains dispatched 25X1
every 15 minutes. This meant that numerous trains were being loaded simultaneously. The empty cars were all sent to Kiev beforehand in order to 25X1
expedite movement. Because of this speed-up it is hard to estimate how long it took. Under normal conditions it took about four hours to load a car manually or 45 minutes with equipment plus about 30 minutes for inspection, switching, and dispatching. Grain trains were given a priority. There would be two grain trains a day moving on all main lines, stopping at designated stations along the way and collecting grain cars at these points on schedule.

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Kiev was a central collecting point for grain. The time for this run took between 24 and 30 hours, including watering, inspections, and changing engines and crews. This time was for special grain trains 25X1
used during the "harvest campaign" and on through schedules. The time varied, depending on the number of cars to be moved and the type of engine used. Now as to the number of days taken between the time a car was loaded to the time that car returned empty and was again loaded ready to move out, it is very difficult to answer. After a car was loaded and sent to Odessa, the screens used on the doors were removed and the car was available to be sent anywhere. The Soviets made sure there were sufficient cars at Kiev at the start of the campaign, or that sufficient cars would be sent there to permit the whole plan to run smoothly. They were willing to have these cars idle for days at Kiev in order to avoid any disruption in the loading and movement of the grain. Now with cars belonging to the grain distribution system (and these were very few) it would take four hours to load, about 30 minutes for inspection, switching, etc, 24 to 30 hours for the run from Kiev to Odessa, plus another four and one half hours for unloading and switching. Adding 24 to 30 hours for the return trip, a car would be gone between 53 and 69 hours or two and one third days to two and three fourths days (approximately). If the car was part of a train moving from station to station and picking up grain cars at various sidings it would take longer.

5. gondola cars covered with tarpaulins used for shipping grain 25X1

in cases of extreme emergency. It was a great responsibility for any railroad official to order such cars to be used because of the danger of loss and damage to the grain. When such cars were used a thorough and rigid inspection was made. When the German occupation authorities used gondola cars in the Ukraine, the Soviet railroad people were amazed.

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